



# New Research Lab Opens at Elephants Alive's Headquarters

[August 29, 2017](#) Blog Sarah Smuts



Dr Kari Morfeld outside the new lab at Elephant's Alive's HQ with landlord Gianni Gelletich  
American research scientist, Dr Kari Morfeld, has opened a new laboratory at Elephants Alive's headquarters. Here her team of researchers will be analysing elephant dung, collected by the Elephants Alive Field Team. The elephant dung is being tested for hormones – to understand stress levels, health, and reproductive patterns.

Dr Kari's research helps understand how a variety of factors (such as poaching events, seasonal changes due to drought, tourism, and human-elephant conflict areas) affect elephant health, stress, and reproduction. We know that stress can cause health issues, and affect reproduction. Thus, we can monitor elephants' response to various conservation efforts in terms of how stressful the events are, and whether the stress is short-term or long-term. Long-term, chronic stress can lead to other health issues, and affect reproductive success.

Dr Kari is also working with Elephants Alive to better understand other aspects of elephant biology. This includes assessing testosterone levels in bull elephants and cross mapping this with other research currently taking place on male communications.